

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CU-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-06 NEA-10
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R 061552Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO SECSTATE WAHDC 2846
INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 3498

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR PORG
SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE MEETING IN ABIDJAN

BEGIN SUMMARY: FROM MARCH 27 TO APRIL 2, GOIC HOSTED A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE IOC AND SOME 90 NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES, THE FIRST SUCH MEETING HELD IN AFRICA. WHILE THE MEETING WAS ESSENTIALLY ADMINISTRATIVE, MILITANT AFRICAN STATES, AS EXPECTED, SOUGHT TO USE IT AS A FORUM TO SEEK STRONGER SANCTIONS AGAINST COUNTRIES CONTINUING SPORTS COMPETITION WITH SOUTH AFRICA, AND TO DEMAND GREATER INFLUENCE IN IOC. LORD KILLANIN AND IOC APPEAR EQUALLY DETERMINED TO RESIST FURTHER POLITICIZATION OF THE OLYMPICS. ISSUE WAS NOT FULLY JOINED IN ABIDJAN, AND NEXT IOC MEETING TO BE HELD IN PRAGUE IN JUNE 1977, PROMISES TO BE STORMY. END SUMMARY.

1. STATED PURPOSES OF ABIDJAN MEETING INCLUDED PRESENTATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS ON THE MOSCOW AND
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LAKE PLACID GAMES AND SUBMISSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY NATIONAL COMMITTEES FOR CONSIDERATION AT PRAGUE. THE MOST VOLATILE ISSUE RAISED WAS THE CALL BY MILITANT AFRICAN STATES, LED BY NIGERIA, TO EXCLUDE FROM FUTURE GAMES ANY COUNTRY THAT ALLOWED ANY SPORTS COMPETITION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THIS WAS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT NEW ZEALAND BUT HARD LINERS

SOUGHT TO INCLUDE BRITAIN, FRANCE AND THE US WHICH CONTINUE TO MEET SOUTH AFRICAN TEAMS IN SUCH SPORTS AS TENNIS AND RUGBY.

2. REALIZING THAT THE EUROPEAN DOMINATION OF THE IOC MAKES IT UNLIKELY SUCH A SWEEPING POSITION WOULD EVER BE ADOPTED, THE AFRICANS ADVANCED A RECOMMENDATION TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE IOC BY GREATLY EXPANDING ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. ANOTHER ISSUE STRESSED BY AFRICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEES WAS THE DISTRIBUTION OF MONEY ACCRUING FROM THE FEES FOR TELEVISION RIGHTS TO THE OLYMPICS. THEY ARGUED FOR A GREATER SHARE OF THESE FUNDS, POINTING TO THEIR GREATER NEED TO DEVELOP OLYMPIC SPORTS.

3. THESE POINTS WERE PRESENTED ONLY AS RECOMMENDATIONS, AND ACTUAL DECISIONS WERE POSTPONED UNTIL THE JUNE IOC MEETING IN PRAGUE. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO PHILIP KRUM OF THE AMERICAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE, THE IOC HAS ALREADY FORMULATED ITS RESPONSE. KRUM TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WAS DETERMINED TO DEPOLITICIZE THE GAMES. WHILE NO ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE BOYCOTTING THE MONTREAL OLYMPICS, ANY FUTURE WITHDRAWALS FOR POLITICAL REASONS WOULD BE PUNISHED BY EXCLUSION FROM SUBSEQUENT GAMES. KRUM ALSO INDICATED THAT THE IOC WAS PREPARED TO ALLOT A LARGER SHARE OF TELEVISION REVENUES TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND EVEN EXPAND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, HE MADE CLEAR THAT IN NO CASE WOULD AFRICANS GET ANYTHING CONFIDENTIAL

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APPROACHING THEIR FULL SHOPPING LIST.

4. IOC APPARENTLY INTENDS TO STICK TO THIS LINE, AND PRAGUE MEETING PROMISES TO BE DIFFICULT. THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE PROPOSED A RECOMMENDATION THAT COINCIDED ALMOST EXACTLY WITH THE REPORTED STAND OF THE IOC CONCERNING THE BOYCOTT ISSUE AND PROVOKED A STRONG REACTION FROM AFRICAN PARTICIPANTS. LORD KILLAIN'S PARTING ASSURANCE THAT A SATISFACTORY COMPROMISE WILL BE FOUND FOR THIS ISSUE MAY BE A BIT OPTIMISTIC.

5. THE SOVIET DELEGATION MAINTAINED A LOW PROFILE DURING THESE MEETINGS. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS GENERALLY AGREED THAT THE RUSSIANS SEEMED DETERMINED TO PLAY THE ROLE OF THE GOOD HOST. THEY STEERED CLEAR OF ANY PUBLIC COMMITMENT ON THE BOYCOTT ISSUE BUT DID PROMISE THAT ALL COUNTRIES RECOGNIZED BY THE IOC WOULD BE WELCOME AT THE MOSCOW GAMES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Subject: INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE MEETING IN ABIDJAN BEGIN SUMMARY: FROM MARCH 27 TO APRIL 2, GOIC HOSTED A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE IOC AND SOME 90
TAGS: PINR, PORG, IV, UR, US, INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
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